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INFO SP 02,SS 35,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSC 01,SAL 01,SAH 03,INR 07,P 04
CIA 04,DOD 01,NSAE 00,USIA 12,AID 30,NIC 01,IO 21,ACDA 17,RSR 01
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R 131220Z SEP 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6765
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4232
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 955
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2518

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Ivan Izenberg DATE Dec 23 '81
EO 3 ☐ or ☐ EXCL. DATE
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5832

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: ELECTION OUTCOME IN AN GIANG

REF: A) SAIGON 5252 B) SAIGON 5833

1. ALTHOUGH DELTA-WIDE THE THIEU/KY SLATE DID ABOUT AS WELL AS EXPECTED WITH 499,031 OF 1,400,417 VALID VOTES OR 36 PERCENT, SHOWING OF GVN SLATE IN HOA HAO STRONGHOLD OF AN GIANG WAS CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN PREDICTED. THIEU HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO SWEEP AN GIAN BY UP TO 50 PERCENT; INSTEAD, HE COLLECTED ONLY 62,035 VOTES OR 24 PERCENT, BELOW BOTH HIS NATIONAL AND DELTA AVERAGES. MOST ASTON-

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ISHING WAS UNEXPECTED DZU STRENGTH. DZU FINISHED A

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STRONG SECOND, GATHERING 43,483 VOTES, OR 28 PERCENT OF THE AN GIANG TOTAL. THIS WAS FAR ABOVE DZU'S NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 17 PERCENT. RESPECTABLE THIRD-PLACE FINISH OF REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIET LEADER HA THUC KY WITH 22,456 (12 PERCENT) IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO KY'S EFFECTIVE LOCAL ORGANIZATION WHOSE ENERGETIC EFFORTS DREW ADMIRING COMMENT FROM OBSERVERS DURING THE CAMPAIGN. HUONG AS ELSEWHERE IN THE DELTA MADE A POOR SHOWING, COLLECTING ONLY 12,215 VOTES FOR A DISMAL 7 PERCENT.

2. MUCH REMAINS TO BE EXPLAINED ABOUT DZU STRENGTH IN AN GIANG. OBVIOUSLY, PATTERN EVIDENT IN III CORPS AND ELSEWHERE OF DZU STRENGTH IN LESS SECURE AREAS WAS NOT REPEATED. DZU ACTUALLY BESTED THIEU IN CHO MOI DISTRICT OF AN GIANG, WHERE SECURITY CONDITIONA ARE AT LEAST AS GOOD IF NOT BETTER THAN ANY OTHER RURAL DISTRICT IN VIET-NAM.

3. IMMEDIATELY AFTER ELECTION SOME LOCAL HOA HAO LEADERS ATTRIBUTED DZU SHOWING TO VIET CONG INFLUENCE: GROUPS OF VC WERE RUMORED TO HAVE ENTERED HAMLETS ADJACENT TO

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CAPITAL CITY OF LONG XUYEN ON NIGHTS BEFORE ELECTION "INSTRUCTING" PEOPLE TO VOTE FOR DZU. NO HARD EVIDENCE OF VC SUPPORT FOR DZU INAN GIANG HAS YET BEEN PRODUCED, AND THESE RUMORS ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE. AT BEST, IF INSTRUCTIONS WERE ISSUED IN THE NAME OF THE VIET CONG TO VOTE FOR DZU, THIS MUST HAVE BEEN DONE WITH COLLUSION OF LOCAL HOA HAO VILLAGE AND DISTRICT COMMITTEES WHOSE TIGHT CONTROL OVER RURAL POPULATION HAS BEEN ACCEPTED AS ESTABLISHED FACT. UNLESS ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE TO CONTRARY IS FORTHCOMING, "VC INFLUENCE" CAN NOT BE ACCEPTED AS REASON FOR DZU VOTE IN HOA HAO AREAS.

4. MORE CREDIBLE EXPLANATIONS ARE AVAILABLE. AN GIANG PROVINCE CHIEF AND LOCAL LEADERS OF MAINLY HOA HAO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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(WHOSE UPPER HOUSE LIST HEADED BY SDP LEADER PHAN BA CAM ALSO DID EXTRAORDINARILY WELL IN AN GIANG, SEE BELOW) ATTRIBUTE DZU VOTE TO PEOPLE'S DESIRE FOR PEACE. THIS WAS NO DOUBT A MAJOR FACTOR. DZU HIMSELF HAS TOLD EMBOFF THAT RADIO AND TV COVERAGE OF HIS SPEECHES PLAYED

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MAJOR ROLE IN HIS STRONG SHOWING, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS. HE SAID HE MET NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN SOUTH WHO TOLD HIM THEY HAD HEARD HIS REMARKS ON LIVE BROADCAST OF AUG 14 JOING PRESS CONFERENCE BY ALL CANDIDATES. TRANSISTOR RADIOS NOW OMNIPRESENT IN VIET-NAM, AND TV HAVING INCREASING IMPACT EVEN ON RURAL AUDIENCES.

6. STRENGTH OF DAN ZAI VIET ORGANIZATION IS PROBABLY ANOTHER REASON. IN SAIGON, LEADERS OF REVOLUTIONARY DAI TAN DAI VITS ALSO HAVE MANY CADRE IN AN GIANG ESPECIALLY IN CHO MOI DISTRICT WHERE DZU DID BEST.

7. A POSSIBLE CLUE TO DZU STRENGTH MAY BE FOUND IN UNEXPECTED STRENGTH OF LARGELY HOA HAO SOCIAL DEMORACTIC PARTY WHOSE UPPER HOUSE SLATE (NUMBER 10, LED BY PHAN BA CAM) POLLED 48,804 VOTES, 10,000 VOTES AHEAD OF ITS NEAREST RIVAL, LIST 10. SDP WAS NOT TESTED AT THE POLLS IN SEPTEMBER, 1966 CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WHEN PARTY LEADER PHAN BA CAM JOINED WITH VARIOUS OTHER DISSATISFIED RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN FORMING "FRONT OF ALL RELIGIONS." FRONT BOYCOTTED CA ELECTIONS.

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BOTH DZU AND CAM'S LIST MADE THEIR BEST SHOWING IN CHO MOI. CAM AND DXU ARE TEMPERAMENTALLY, AND AS OUTSPOKEN CRITICS OF THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO POLITICALLY, OF SOMEWHAT THE SAME SOLORING. NO HOA HAO LEADER INCLUDING PHAN BA CAM HAS TO OUR KNOWLEDGE PUBLICLY EXPRESSED SUPPORT OF DZU; HOWEVER, SDP CAREFULLY AVOIDED TAKING ANY PUBLIC POSITION WITH REGARD TO PRESIDENTIAL RACE

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AND POSSIBILITY THAT SOME ARRANGEMENT BETWEE CAM AND DZU WAS ARRIVED AT REMAINS. TIEU/KY RIVALRY MAY ALSO HAVE PLAYED A PART IN THESE EVENTS: SDP CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER TRINH QUOC KHANH HAD BEEN PROOSED AS VICE-PRESIDENTIAL RUNNING MATE FOR THIEU BEFORE THIEU/KY JOINT SLATE WAS PUT TOGETHER. KHANH WA THIEU'S OBVIOUS BID TO SPLIT KY HOLD OVER HOA HAO WHICH KY HAD ASSIDUOUSLY CULTIVATED CAM'S CLOSEST RIVAL IN UPPER HOUSE RACE IN AN GIANG WAS LA THANH NGHE'S LIST NUMBER 2, WHICH INCLUDES KY'S PRINCIPAL HOA HAO CONTACTS LE PHUOC SANG AND LE QUANG LIEM, BOTH BITTER RIVALS OF PHAM BA CAM WITHIN HOA HAO POWER STRUCTURE. IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE CAM-DZU RELATIONSHIP, IF ANY, AND EXTENT

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TO WHICH THIEU/KY RIVALRY WEE REFLECTED IN HOA HAO VOTE, CAN BE DETERMINED.

8. ONE-THIRD TO ONE-HALF OF HOA HAO VOTE IN AN GIANG WENT TO JOING GVN SLATE; FAILURE OF HOA HAO LEADERSHIP PUBLICLY TO ENDORSE THIEU-KY TICKET (AN ISSUE WHICH WAS DEBATED UNTIL LAST MINUTE) PLUS SDP OPPOSITION CUT INTO HOA HAO SUPPORT FOR GVN SLATE. THIEU SHOWING WAS BEST IN THOT NOT DISTRICT WHERE HE BESTED DZU BY ALMOST THREE TO ONE, DUE LARGELY TO SUPPORT FROM NORTHERN CATHOLICS. IN FACT, WITHOUT CATHOLIC VOTE THIEU CONCEIVABLY COULD HAVE LOST AN GIANG.

9. IN UPPER HOUSE RACE, AS NOTED ABOVE SDP LIST NUMBER 10 FINSIHED FAR AHEAD WITH 48,000 VOTES FOLLOWED BY LIST 2 WITH ABOUT 38,000. CLOSELY GROUPS IN THIRD, FOURTH AND FIFTH PLACE WERE THREE "COCONUT" LISTS NUMBERS 34, 33, AND 32 I I THT ORDER. THESE LISTS WERE ENDORSED BY TUOI FACTION HOA HAO LEADERSH THEIR RELATIVELY POOR SHOWING VIS-A-VIS LIST 2, WHICH INCLUDES TUONG LIEUTENANTS, AND SDP LIST SHEDS SOME LIGHT ON TUOI FACTION STRENGTH IN AN GIANG. SIX PLACE FINISHER IN THE UPPER HOUSE RACE WAS REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIET ENTRY AND NATIONAL WINNER LIST NUMBER 21, AGAIN DEMONSTRATING VALUE OF SMALL

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BUT TIGHT RDV ORGANIZATION.

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